



To: Glynda Carr, Higher Heights
From: Lauren Goldstein, Change Research
Date: October 4, 2020
Re: Nationwide Black Women Poll

Key Findings

A poll from Change Research of 506 likely 2020 Black women voters nationwide from September 30-October 4, 2020¹ shows:

- **Motivation.** 75% of Black women say they are more motivated to vote now than they have ever been; 25% say that while they will vote, they are growing hopeless that it won't bring the change they want to see.
- **Top Issues.** Black women voters are highly attuned to a set of priorities that also reflect their greatest anxieties about 2020: the consequences of losing the election; the need for a robust response to the coronavirus crisis; and the need for racial justice. These themes emerge whenever we ask voters what they are most motivated by, what they are most worried about, and what issues they want to see prioritized.
- **Political Power.** These voters seem to grasp their own political power to make a difference in the outcome of this election. We asked voters to choose from a list of demographic groups who they think can make the biggest difference to the outcome of the Presidential election if they turn out in big numbers. 64% chose Black women, and this was the group most commonly selected from the list.

Voting in 2020 - Motivation and Information

75% of Black women say they are more motivated to vote now than they have ever been; 25% say that while they will vote, they are growing hopeless that it won't bring the change they want to see. Voters over and under 50 approach this question differently. Approximately 65% of voters under 50 say they are more motivated than ever, while 35% say they are growing hopeless. By contrast, among voters over 50, approximately 86% say they are more motivated than ever, and only 14% say they are growing hopeless that voting won't bring the change they are looking for.

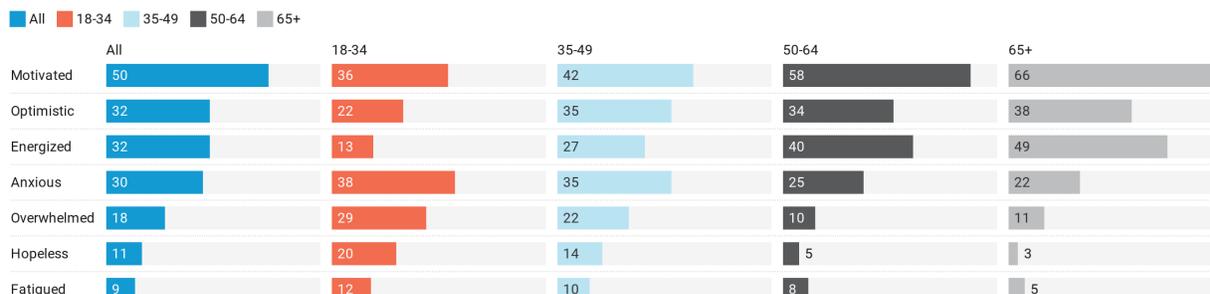
We asked voters an open-ended question: *“what is one word or phrase that best describes your motivation for voting this year?”* Voters commonly referenced the need for change, as well as the need for racial justice. Voters commonly described or alluded to the very high stakes of this election when responding to this question; they often referred to the need to “protect our democracy” and the fact that people must vote like their literal lives depend on it.

We also asked these voters to indicate which emotions from a list best described how they were feeling about voting this year. The most common answer was “motivated” (50% selected), though this is driven by voters over 50. Among voters 18-34, “motivated” was a close second to the most common selection: “anxious” (38%). Among voters 35-49, an equal number chose “optimistic” and “anxious” (35%). Voters over 50 most commonly say they are feeling “motivated” and “energized.”

¹ Using its Dynamic Online Sampling Engine to attain a sample reflective of the electorate, Change Research polled 506 people nationwide from September 30-October 4, 2020. The margin of error is 4.64%. Post-stratification weighting was performed on age, region, education, and 2016 vote. Weighting parameters were based on voter file data and election results were based on numbers released by the Secretaries of State.

Emotions About Voting This Year

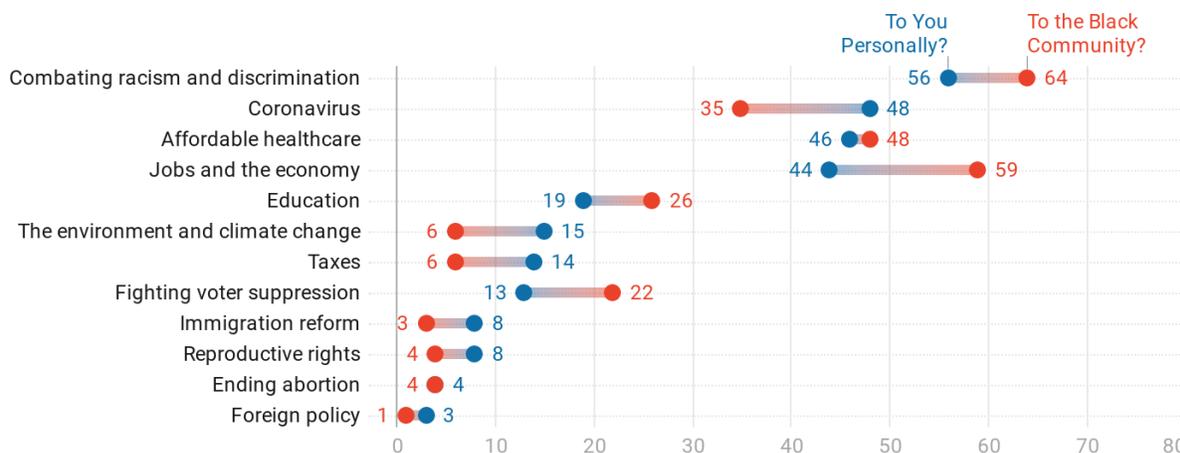
"Which of the following best describes how you are feeling about voting this year? You can choose up to three."



Issues and Priorities

We asked voters to indicate what 1-3 top issues were most important to them personally and, in their opinion, to the Black community. Voters' top issues of personal importance to them are combating racism and discrimination, coronavirus, affordable healthcare, and jobs and the economy. Interestingly, while 48% of voters said coronavirus was a top issue for them personally, only 35% chose coronavirus as a top three issue for the Black community. Combating racism and discrimination, jobs and the economy, education, and fighting voter suppression were the four issues where more voters chose this as a top three issue for the Black community than for themselves personally.

Most Important Issues



What Keeps You Up At Night?

We asked voters an open-ended question, "what is the one main issue that keeps you up at night?" The most common answer referenced **racism** (approximately 92 respondents mentioned), with frequent mentions of police brutality and the very real fear of being physically harmed or killed:

- "Not sure if a police officer will break in my house and shoot me like Breonna Taylor or be killed like George Floyd and many more."
- "Feeling safe in my black skin in this country"
- "Worrying about my Black son in this racist society."

Voters also very commonly referenced **coronavirus** as a top issue that keeps them up at night (approximately 52 mentioned), as well as the uncertainty around who will win **the 2020 election**.

Coronavirus

We asked voters to indicate how concerned they feel about a variety of aspects of the coronavirus pandemic. The number one area of concern was the need for children to be able to get a good education without compromising health and safety: 66% of voters say they are very concerned about this issue. Voters also express high levels of concern about the health impacts of the pandemic both on themselves and on their loved ones. 61% of voters are very concerned about their parents’ or older relatives’ physical health; 54% are very concerned about their own physical health; and 49% are very concerned about their own mental health.

Racial Justice

We asked voters whether they felt differently about the possibility of the United States making progress on racial justice in light of the protests that began early in the summer. The plurality (38%) of voters say they feel the same way they did before. 34% say they feel more hopeful, and 28% say they feel *less* hopeful.

Perceptions of Political Power

We asked voters to choose from a list of demographic groups who they think can make the biggest difference to the outcome of the Presidential election if they turn out in big numbers. These voters appear to grasp their own political power: 64% chose Black women, and this was the group most commonly selected from the list. Voters also perceive that Black men have considerable power over election outcomes, when they choose to exercise it (40%) selected, as well as young voters (52% selected). By far, these were the three most commonly selected groups.

We also asked voters to choose which statement they agree with more:

- STATEMENT A: *The outcome of this election hinges on me and voters like me. When we vote, we make a difference in who wins.*
- STATEMENT B: *People like me don't have much political power. When we vote, it doesn't make very much of a difference in who wins.*

Which of the following do you agree with more?

	All	18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
Statement A much more	66	47	56	78	89
Statement A somewhat more	18	30	21	14	6
Statement B somewhat more	10	18	12	6	3
Statement B much more	6	4	11	3	3

Overall, again, these voters seem attuned to their own political power and ability to sway the election when they turn out..